

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-10 EB-08 DLOS-09 IO-13 L-03
PM-05 SP-02 SS-15 H-01 OIC-02 INR-10 /086 W
-----122557 261205Z /14

P 260542Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5635
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 WELLINGTON 02789

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

TOKYO FOR RFO, CINCPAC FOR POLAD, HICOMTERPACIS FOR
STATUS LNO

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: EFIS, PLOS, EX, NZ
SUBJECT: SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL FISHERIES ORGANIZATION
- (SPRFO)

REF: A) SUVA 0849, B) SUVA 0802, C) SUVA 0799 AND PREVIOUS,
D) STATE 131771

SUMMARY: EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THE PROPOSED SOUTH PACIFIC
REGIONAL FISHERIES ORGANIZATION (SPRFO) IS CURRENTLY THE
MOST IMPORTANT REGIONAL (SOUTH PACIFIC) ISSUE FOR THE
USG AND OUR ISLAND NEIGHBORS. YET, DESPITE SEVERAL SIG-
NIFICANT AND SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO BRIEF REGIONAL
STATES ON THE USG FISHERIES POSITION, PARTICULARLY WITH
RESPECT TO THE PROPOSED SPRFO, THE US AND ITS TUNA
INDUSTRY ARE NOT CONSIDERED BY SEVERAL STATES TO BE
TRUSTWORTHY AND DESIRABLE REGIONAL PARTNERS. INCLUDED
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AMONG SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING THIS SUSPICION ARE
AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL POLITICAL TALKS WITH PNG PRIMIN SOMARE,
A SMALLER USG DELEGATION AT THE JUNE SPEC MEETING,
MAINTENANCE OF NEGOTIATING PATIENCE AND AVOIDANCE OF
CONFRONTATION WITH THE GPNG, AND SUPPORT TO THOSE STATES
WILLING TO ARGUE THE US CASE FOR INCLUSION IN THE SPRFO.

ACTION REQUESTED: (A) THAT AMBASSADOR OLMSTEAD, GIVEN HER CONCURRENCE, BE AUTHORIZED TO PRESS FURTHER THE US CASE, ON A POLITICAL LEVEL, WITH PNG PRIMIN SOMARE; (B) THE SIZE OF THE US DELEGATION AND PARTICULARLY THE NUMBER OF TUNA INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES AT THE JUNE SUVA MEETING BE RESTRICTED; (C) THE DEPARTMENT ADVISE THE GNZ IMMEDIATELY OF ITS HOPE THAT CHRIS BEEBE WILL BE ABLE TO RETURN FROM TEHRAN TO RESUME THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE SPRFO NEGOTIATING SESSIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. AS ADDRESSEES ARE AWARE, THE AMOUNT OF SUBSTANTIVE REPORTING IN RECENT WEEKS ON THE PROPOSED SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL FISHERIES ORGANIZATION (SPRFO) HAS BEEN VOL-UMINOUS, AND UNDERSTANDABLY SO, BECAUSE THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN SPRFO IS CURRENTLY AND UNQUESTIONABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT REGIONAL (SOUTH PACIFIC) ISSUE FOR THE USG AND FOR OUR PACIFIC NEIGHBORS.

2. IN THIS REGARD, EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO MAKE, INTER ALIA, THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS:

- A) THE BUSBY-LED FISHERIES TEAM VISITS THROUGH THE REGION IN APRIL-MAY CONTRIBUTED SUBSTANTIALITY TO IMPROVED REGIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF US FISHERIES LEGISLATION, POLICY AND OBJECTIVES;

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- B) DESPITE HEAD-TO-HEAD DISCUSSIONS, SEVERAL GOVERNMENTS -- MOST NOTABLY PAPUA NEW GUINEA -- REMAIN UNCONVINCED THAT THE USG WOULD BE A DESIRABLE AND PERHAPS EVEN TRUSTWORTHY PARTNER IN A REGIONAL FISHERIES REGIME;

- C) CONSIDERABLE USG PERSUASION--PERHAPS MORE POLITICAL THAN TECHNICAL--REMAINS TO BE DONE WITH THE GOVERNMENTS OF SEVERAL PACIFIC ISLAND STATES;

- D) USG PARTICIPATION AT THE JUNE 5-10 SUVA NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE DESIGNED ESSENTIALLY TO CONVINCE ALL OF THE REGIONAL STATES OF OUR DESIRE TO PARTICIPATE IN, BUT NOT TO DOMINATE, A REGIONAL FISHERIES ORGANIZATION;

- E) IT WILL BE IMPORTANT, THEREFORE, THAT THE USG DELEGATION AT SUVA BE CAREFULLY BALANCED TO INCLUDE THE SMALLEST POSSIBLE NUMBER OF OFFICIALS WHO CAN SPEAK WITH AUTHORITY ON USG FISHING POLICY AND A MINIMAL NUMBER OF FISHING INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES;

- F) WE MUST ALSO CONTINUE TO KEEP OUR FRIENDS ON

THIS ISSUE FULLY BRIEFED ON USG POSITIONS;

- G) BECAUSE THIS IS A MAJOR REGIONAL ENDEAVOR IN WHICH THE USG HAS INDICATED A DESIRE TO BECOME FULLY INVOLVED, WE MUST MAINTAIN OUR PATIENCE, REMAIN OPEN TO COMPROMISE AND AVOID AN APPEARANCE OF CONFRONTATION WHICH COULD ONLY LOSE US SUPPORT AND ENGENDER MORE MISTRUST.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-10 EB-08 DLOS-09 IO-13 L-03
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P 260542Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5636
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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TOKYO FOR RFO

3. ONE OF THE RESULTS OF THE SPEC SPECIAL MEETING IN SUVA MAY 8-11 WAS A REQUEST FROM SPEC DIRECTOR MAHE THAT FORUM STATES REPORT TO HIM BY MAY 24 THEIR VIEWS ON SEVERAL NEGOTIATING ISSUES. THE GNZ REPLY, FROM PRIMIN MULDOON, HAS BEEN SENT TO MAHE AND A COPY MADE AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY. IT:

- A) REAFFIRMS THE GNZ'S COMMITMENT TO THE PORT MORESBY DECLARATION AND TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL FISHERIES ORGANIZATION;
- B) INSISTS THAT THE FORUM COUNTRIES "CONTINUE TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES OF DRAFTING A CONVENTION WITH UNITED STATES PARTICIPATION";
- C) NOTES THAT PRIMIN MULDOON "REGISTERED" WITH VICE

PRESIDENT MONDALE THE GNZ'S "CONCERN THAT THE US
SHOULD REACH AN ACCOMMODATION WITH THE SOUTH PACIFIC
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COUNTRIES";

- D) CASTS DOUBT ON THE ACCEPTABILITY OF AN ADVISORY
COMMITTEE ON HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES (HMS) AND ON
FIJI'S DRAFT FORMULA FOR MEMBERSHIP (PARAS 6 AND 11 OF
REFTEL C);

- E) EMBRACES THE SO-CALLED "TWO-TREATY" APPROACH ON
HMS;

- F) ENCOURAGES MAHE TO CONVENE A POLITICAL LEVEL
MEETING, PRIOR TO THE JUNE 5 SUVA MEETING, TO DEVELOP
A COMMON FORUM POSITION AND SUGGESTS THAT THE WESTERN
SAMOAN INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS IN APIA (JUNE 1-2)
MIGHT BE AN APPROPRIATE OCCASION. (COMMENT: EMBASSY
UNDERSTANDS THAT MAHE HAS NOW CALLED THIS MINI-FORUM
MEETING DESIGNED TO RE-WORK THE PORT MORESBY DECLARATION
INTO AN AGREED FORUM POSITION WHICH WILL ENABLE US
PARTICIPATION IN SPRFO. END COMMENT.)

4. IN ADDITIONAL TALKS WITH GNZ OFFICIALS (COTTON,
SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION, AND KEATING, LEGAL DIVISION),
EMBOFF WAS ADVISED THAT SPECIFIC FOLLOW-UP INSTRUCTIONS
ARE NOW BEING PREPARED FOR GNZ HIGH COMMISSIONER IN
PORT MORESBY. INSTRUCTIONS WILL INCLUDE A REQUEST FOR
HIM TO SEEK AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH PRIMIN
SOMARE TO DISCUSS SPRFO. GNZ OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT
WORKING LEVEL GPNG FISHERIES PERSONNEL ARE NOW EN-
TRENCHED IN ANTI-US POSITIONS (PERHAPS PERSONALLY MOTI-
VATED), ARE TOTALLY ABSORBED WITH THE SOVEREIGNTY
ISSUE, AND CONVINCED THAT AN SPRFO WHICH INCLUDES THE
US WILL RESULT IN THE USG TELLING THE GPNG HOW TO
MANAGE ITS FISHING. A POLITICAL APPROACH,
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DIRECTLY TO SOMARE, THEREFORE, NOW HOLDS THE BEST HOPE,
IN THE GNZ VIEW, FOR MOVING THE TALKS FORWARD WITH USG
PARTICIPATION ASSURED. (GNZ'S REASONING IS THAT SOMARE
IS MUCH MORE ATTUNED TO POLITICAL REALITIES AND WOULD
BE UNLIKELY TO CARRY THE SOVEREIGNTY ISSUE TO THE POINT
OF EXCLUDING THE US -- IF ANY OTHER SOLUTION IS
AVAILABLE.) GNZ URGES THAT A SIMILAR POLITICAL LEVEL

APPROACH BE MADE BY AMBASSADOR OLMSTEAD DIRECTLY TO SOMARE. IT WAS FURTHER SUGGESTED THAT WHILE AMBASSADOR OLMSTEAD SHOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS TECHNICAL DETAILS, SHE SHOULD PLACE EMPHASIS IN HER TALKS WITH SOMARE ON THE POLITICAL ASSETS OF AN SPRFO WHICH INCLUDES THE US, VERSUS THE CONTINUING POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF ONE WHICH EXCLUDES US OR EVEN NO SPRFO AT ALL. ACTION SUGGESTED: THAT AMBASSADOR OLMSTEAD, GIVEN HER CONCURRENCE, BE AUTHORIZED TO MAKE AN APPROPRIATE POLITICAL APPROACH ON SPRFO TO SOMARE.

5. FYI: GNZ CONSIDERS WESTERN SAMOA, TONGA, NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA, AND FIJI TO BE FIRMLY IN US CAMP ON SPRFO ISSUE. IT CONSIDERS PNG, SOLOMONS, TUVALU, NIUE, AND NAURU TO BE IN OPPOSITION TO USG PARTICIPATION. BUT OF THE LATTER FIVE, THE GPNG IS CONSIDERED THE ONLY MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCK. END FYI.

6. FROM THE DISTANCE OF WELLINGTON, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT A COMMON ELEMENT AMONG THE OPPOSITION STATES IS NO LONGER SO MUCH THEIR SHALLOW TECHNICAL UNDERSTANDING OF USG POSITIONS (THE BUSBY VISITS OVERCAME MOST OF THOSE PROBLEMS), BUT A LACK OF TRUST IN THE US AS A PARTNER IN AN SPRFO. IN SHORT, THEY SEEM TO VIEW THE AMERICAN TUNA INDUSTRY AS PREDATORY AND THE USG AS UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO POLICE ITS TUNA BOATS.

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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
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INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
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TOKYO FOR RFO

THE PRESENCE IN SUVA LAST NOVEMBER OF A VERY LARGE US DELEGATION, INCLUDING A NUMBER OF TUNA INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES, CERTAINLY DID NOTHING TO DISPEL THAT IMAGE. PERHAPS THE VISIT OF A HOUSE MERCHANT MARINE STAFF MEMBER AND AN INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVE TO PORT MORESBY BEFORE THE JUNE SUVA MEETING (REFTEL D) CAN CONVINCE THE GPNG THAT THE US TUNA INDUSTRY IS RELIABLE AND THAT THE TAIL WILL NOT WAG THE DOG. A SMALLER US DELEGATION IN SUVA IN JUNE, HOWEVER, MIGHT BE A SURER BET.

ACTION REQUESTED: THAT THE SIZE OF THE US DELEGATION TO SUVA BE SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED.

7. EMBASSY HAS PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED WITH MFA THE POSSIBILITY THAT GNZ'S CHRIS BEEBE CONTINUE AS SPRFO NEGOTIATING SESSION CHAIRMAN. BEEBE, WHO HAS NOW BEEN IN TEHRAN ONE MONTH AS NEW ZEALAND'S NEW AMBASSADOR, WOULD APPEAR TO BE AVAILABLE, BUT ONLY IF SPEC OFFICIALS CONFIDENTIAL

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OR SEVERAL SPEC MEMBER STATES FORMALLY REQUEST IT OF THE GNZ. AN ORAL REQUEST HAS BEEN MADE BY THE AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION AND EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT GOA IS CONSIDERING A FORMAL APPROACH.

ACTION REQUESTED: IF THE DEPARTMENT DOES INDEED WANT TO MAKE A PITCH FOR BEEBE'S CONTINUED CHAIRMANSHIP, IT SHOULD INSTRUCT US TO APPROACH THE GNZ TO THAT EFFECT IMMEDIATELY.

8. FINALLY, EMBASSY WISHES TO REGISTER STRONG RESERVATIONS ON THE CENTRAL THEME OF SUVA'S 0802. DESPITE THE GPNG'S APPARENT INTRANSIGENCE ON THE HMS ISSUE, AND DESPITE THE APPEARANCE OF A GPNG "DOUBLE-CROSS" ON THE "TWO-TREATY" APPROACH, EMBASSY QUESTIONS WHETHER EFFORTS TO "COMPEL PNG TO FISH OR CUT BAIT" WOULD BE USEFUL. FIRSTLY, WERE THE USG TO DO SO, EMBASSY BELIEVES WE WOULD QUICKLY BE STANDING ALONE, ABANDONED BY THOSE STATES WHO, EVEN THOUGH THEY DISAGREE WITH THE GPNG, WILL NOT ACCEPT CONFRONTATION AS THE "PACIFIC WAY." IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT VIRTUALLY EVERY FORUM STATE, AT BOTTOM, BELONGS IN THE CAMP OF THOSE WHO FAVOR EXCLUSIVE COASTAL STATE JURISDICTION. THEREFORE, THEY CANNOT BE PUSHED TOO FAR OR TOO FAST TOWARD THE USG POSITION WITHOUT REACTING NEGATIVELY. EMBASSY IS CONFIDENT, FOR INSTANCE, THAT THIS WOULD BE THE REACTION OF THE GNZ TO A US-INITIATED CONFRONTATION. SECONDLY, BECAUSE THE SPRFO IS A NEW MAJOR SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL UNDERTAKING IN WHICH THE US HAS

BECOME FULLY ENGAGED, IT IS IMPORTANT FOR OUR FUTURE
RELATIONSHIPS IN THE AREA THAT WE EXHIBIT EXTREME
PATIENCE, AVOID EVERY APPEARANCE OF BULLYING AND OFFER
NO BASIS FOR REGIONAL SUSPICIONS. SO LONG AS WE HAVE
SUPPORTIVE FRIENDS LIKE WESTERN SAMOA AND NZ, WHO ARE
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ABLE AND WILLING TO CONTINUE PRESSING FOR FULL US
PARTICIPATION IN SPRFO, WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO NEGOTIATE.
WHILE THE TALKS LAST NOVEMBER HELD PROMISE OF AN EARLY,
SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION, THEY ARE NONETHELESS ONLY SEVEN
MONTHS OLD. THERE IS NO REASON FOR US TO BECOME
IMPATIENT. IF OTHERS ARE TO WORK SUCCESSFULLY WITH US,
HOWEVER, WE MUSTHISURMUTHAT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE US
POSITIONS ARE FULLY UNDERSTOOD BY THEM. THE IMPORTANCE
OF REGULAR, DETAILED DEPARTMENTAL ADVICE AND PERIODIC
EXPERTS VISITS, LIKE THE RECENT FISHERIES TEAM VISIT,
CANNOT BE OVEREMPHASIZED IN THIS REGARD. HEALY

NOTE BY OC/T: SECTION 2 SERVICED; TO FOLLOW.

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